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| 09/932,606 | 08/17/2001 | Michael A. Leska | END920010060US1 | 5084 |
| 7590 | 05/01/2006 | | EXAMINER | |
| IBM Corp Dept. 917 3605 Highway 52 North Rochester, MN 55901-7829 | | | JARRETT, SCOTT L | |
| | | | ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER |
| | | | 3623 | |

DATE MAILED: 05/01/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

| | | |
|------------------------------|------------------|--------------|
| Office Action Summary | Application No. | Applicant(s) |
| | 09/932,606 | LESKA ET AL. |
| | Examiner | Art Unit |
| | Scott L. Jarrett | 3623 |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 February 2006.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-36 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-36 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____. 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. This **Final** office action is in response to Applicant's amendment filed February 27, 2006. Applicant's amendment amended claims 1-36. Currently claims 1-36 are pending.

Response to Amendment

2. The Objection to the Abstract is withdrawn.

The Objection to Claim 36 is withdrawn in response to Applicant's amendments to Claim 36.

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-36 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Title

4. The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

The following title is suggested: System and Method For Scheduling Individual Meetings Between a Single User and A Plurality of Invitee Users.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

5. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

6. Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Regarding Claim 17, Claim 17 recites the limitation "said **first** appointment template object" in Claim 17. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Examiner interpreted the claim to read "said **first** appointment template object" for the purposes of examination.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claims 1-2, 4-5, 10-13, 14-17, 20-21, 23-24, 29-33 and 34-36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Levoy, Marc, Demo Time Sign Up Sheet (1999) in view of Microsoft Outlook 2000 (MS Outlook) as evidenced by at least Padwick et al., Using Microsoft Outlook 2000 (1999).

Regarding Claims 1, 17, 20 and 36 teaches an online version of an old and very well known sign-up sheet approach to scheduling individual meetings (appointments, reservations, etc.; e.g. class project demos) with a plurality of users/invitees (i.e. enables a plurality of users to schedule a plurality of individual meetings with a primary user/instructor; "Demo Time Sign-Up Sheet", Pages 3, 9).

More specifically Levoy teaches a system and method for scheduling a plurality of individual meetings with a plurality of invitee users on a calendar of a primary user comprising:

- identifying available meeting times via a (primary) appointment template (object; i.e. inviter's/primary user's schedule/calendar, sign-up sheet; "Demo Time Sign-Up Sheet", Pages 3-4);

- instructing the invitees to access the appointment template to schedule an individual appointment with the inviter/primary user (evidenced by the multiple groups/teams which have already scheduled/reserved an timeslot to demo their class project to the instructor, otherwise the sign up sheet would be completely empty;

Paragraph 1, Page 3);

- each invitee (sequentially) accessing the (primary) appointment template (inviter's schedule/calendar, sign-up sheet) to schedule an individual appointment (time slot for class project demo) with the primary users/inviter at a time indicated as available (empty) on the (primary) appointment template (sign-up sheet; "Demo Time Sign-Up Sheet, cs248, Project 3", Pages 3-7); and

- upon each invitee selecting an available (empty) time from the (primary) appointment template for an individual appointment, updating the (primary) appointment template to remove the selected appointment from the available time (i.e. indicate that the time slot is no longer available by indicating that the appointment is booked/reserved for invitees subsequently accessing the appointment template/sign-up sheet; "Demo Time Sign-Up Sheet, cs248, Project 3", Pages 3-7).

Levoy further teaches that the system and method for scheduling a plurality of individual meetings is web-based and utilizes well-known Internet technologies such as CGI scripts (Pages 14-15).

While Levoy inherently teaches distributing/making available the primary user's appointment template, as evidenced by the already scheduled demo appointments,

Levoy does not expressly teach sending (distributing) a *meeting request* to a plurality of invitees as claimed.

MS Outlook teaches sending (distributing) a *meeting request* (invite) to a plurality of invitees (Chapter 10 Managing Calendars – Planning Meetings, Pages 2 of 5 and 4 of 5) in analogous art of calendaring (meeting scheduling) for the purposes of requesting invitees attend a meeting (Chapter 10 Managing Calendars – Inviting People to Meetings, Page 1 of 9).

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention that the system and method for scheduling a plurality of individual meetings with a plurality of users/invitees as taught by Levoy with its utilization of the well known and widely used sign-up sheet to schedule appointments would have benefited from sending a meeting request (invite) to a plurality of invitees in view of the teachings of MS Outlook; the resultant system/method enabling the scheduler (primary user, inviter) to send email notifications/meeting requests to a plurality of user invitees requesting they attend one or more individual meetings (MS Outlook: Chapter 10 Managing Calendars – Inviting People to Meetings, Page 1 of 9).

Regarding Claims 2 and 21 Levoy teaches a system and method for scheduling a plurality of individual meetings further comprising identifying available meeting times by specifying days worked (“Monday, November 15, 1999”, Page 3), workday start and

ending times (Time 8.00, Column 1, Row 1, Page 3; Time 6.00, Column 1, Row 1, Page 8) and blocking out previously scheduled appointments ("TA Meeting", Column 1, Row 6, Page 3) and break times on the primary user's calendar (schedule, "Lunch", Column 1, Row 2, Page 4; "Lunch Break", Column 1, Row 3, Page 11).

Regarding Claims 4 and 23 Levoy teaches a system and method for scheduling a plurality of individual meetings further comprising ("Demo Time Sign-Up Sheet", Pages 3-7):

- scheduling a (first) meeting (appointment, demo) responsive to a user selecting a (first) available time (appointment; "10.15 Duck Shoot Duncan Riach", Row 3, Page 3);
- entering the appointment/meeting into the (primary) appointment template ("10.00 Lorenzo Torresani", Row 2, Page 3);
- notifying the invitee user of the (first) meeting (i.e. displaying the updated sign-up sheet having the invitees name/group name placed in the selected/scheduled appointment; Rows 2-3, Page 3); and
- blocking further (subsequent, additional, etc.) users from scheduling a (second) conflicting meeting (i.e. replacing the (empty) link with the group/individuals name who is scheduled to present their class project demo during the selected time slot; Paragraph 1, Page 3; Rows 1-6, Page 3).

Levoy does not expressly teach notifying the primary user of the scheduled/entered meeting as claimed.

MS Outlook teaches notifying the primary user of the scheduled meeting (Chapter 10 Managing Calendars – Inviting People to Meetings, Pages 4-5 of 9; Figures 10.40 – 10.41) in an analogous art of calendaring for the purposes updating the primary user's calendar as well as enabling the primary user to track the invitees response (accept, tentative, decline, etc.; Figures 10.40 – 10.41).

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention that the system and method for scheduling a plurality of individual meetings as taught by Levoy et al. would have benefited from notifying the (primary) user and the (first) invitee of the scheduled meeting in view of the teachings of MS Outlook; the resultant system/method updating the primary user's calendar and/or enabling the primary user to track the invitees response (accept, tentative, decline, etc.; MS Outlook: Figures 10.40 – 10.41).

Regarding Claims 5 and 24 Levoy teaches a system and method for scheduling a plurality of individual meetings further comprising:

- the invitee users iteratively (successively) selecting multiple meetings times (appointments) from the (primary) appointment template (primary user's calendar, schedule, sign-up sheet) until there is one time selected by each of the invitee users

(implicit in the class project demonstration sign-up sheet is the need for each student/group to schedule a time to present their project wherein students select an empty time slot and schedule their appointment by providing the student(s) name and other relevant information; “Demo Time Sign-Up Sheet”, Pages 3-7 and 9-11); and

- notifying the invitee users of the one time (i.e. displaying the invitee's name/group name in the selected/scheduled appointment time slot; “10.00 Lorenzo Torresani”, Row 2, Page 3).

Levoy does not expressly teach notifying the primary user of the scheduled/entered meeting as claimed.

MS Outlook teaches notifying the primary user of the scheduled meeting (“10. Choose Send in the form’s Standard toolbar to send the message. The proposed meeting is added to your calendar with a meeting icon to identify it.”, Chapter 10 Managing Calendars – Inviting People to Meetings, Page 3; Chapter 10 Managing Calendars – Inviting People to Meetings, Pages 4-5 of 9; Figures 10.40 – 10.41) in an analogous art of calendaring for the purposes updating the primary user’s calendar as well as enabling the primary user to track the invitees response (accept, tentative, decline, etc.; Figures 10.40 – 10.41).

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention that the system and method for scheduling a plurality of individual meetings as taught

by Levoy et al. would have benefited from notifying the (primary) user and the (first) invitee of the scheduled meeting in view of the teachings of MS Outlook; the resultant system/method updating the primary user's calendar and/or enabling the primary user to track the invitees response (accept, tentative, decline, etc.; MS Outlook: Figures 10.40 – 10.41).

Regarding Claims 10 and 29 Levoy teaches a system and method for scheduling a plurality of individual meetings further comprising distributing the (primary) appointment template to invitee users in graphical format wherein the appointment template is retrieved from a (primary) server (web server; "Demo Time Sign-Up Sheet", Pages 3-7 and 9-11; CGI script, Web page source code, Pages 14-15).

Levoy does not expressly teach invitee users receiving and subsequently opening/reading a note as claimed.

MS Outlook teaches a primary user sending meeting invitations/requests to one or more invitee users who subsequently open, read (read the meeting invitation, its relationship to their schedule/calendar, etc.; "adjacent to another appointment on your calendar") and respond to the primary user (Chapter 10 Managing Calendars – Inviting People to Meetings, Pages 4-5 of 9; Figure 10.35) in an analogous art of calendaring for the purposes of enabling invitee users to see/review the meeting requests, understand the meeting request in relationship to other meetings/scheduled events on their

calendar and provide feedback/responses to the meeting organizer/requestor (primary user; Chapter 10 Managing Calendars – Inviting People to Meetings, Pages 4-5 of 9; Figure 10.35, 10.39).

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention that the system and method for scheduling a plurality of individual meetings as taught by Levoy would have benefited from invitee users receiving and subsequently opening/reading a note containing the appointment template in view of the teachings of MS Outlook the resultant system/method enabling users to review meeting invitations/requests, understand requested appointments relationship to other appointments on the users calendar and/or respond appropriately to the invitation (MS Outlook: Chapter 10 Managing Calendars – Inviting People to Meetings, Pages 4-5 of 9; Figure 10.35, 10.39).

Regarding Claims 11 and 30 Levoy teaches a system and method for scheduling a plurality of individual meetings further comprising upon the (first) invitee user's selection of an available meeting (appointment) time updating the (primary) appointment template (schedule, calendar, sign-in sheet) to block further (subsequent) invitee users from selecting the meeting time selected by the (first) invitee user (i.e. placing the invitee user's name/group name in the scheduled time block thereby indicating that the appointment time slot is no longer available; Paragraph 1, Page 3; "Demo Sign-Up Sheet", Pages 3-7).

Regarding Claims 12 and 31 Levoy teaches a system and method for scheduling a plurality of individual meetings further comprising a primary appointment template (schedule, sign-up sheet) which invitee users (students) view (open/read) the (primary) appointment template (sign-up sheet) and schedule individual appointments with the primary user (instructor) wherein the primary user's calendar subsequently updates upon the selection of an appointment by the one or more invitee users as discussed above.

Levoy does not expressly teach invitee users receiving and subsequently opening/reading a note or creating a merged appointment template from the primary appointment template and a calendar object as claimed.

MS Outlook teaches a primary user sending meeting invitations/requests to one or more invitee users who subsequently open, read (read the meeting invitation, its relationship to their schedule/calendar, etc.; "adjacent to another appointment on your calendar"; Figure 10.35; "alerts you of any conflicts", Calendar button, Figure 10.38 – wherein the calendar button displays a merged/composite of the user's calendar and the requested meeting/appointment time) and respond to the primary user (Chapter 10 Managing Calendars – Inviting People to Meetings, Pages 4-5 of 9) in an analogous art of calendaring for the purposes of enabling invitee users to see/review the meeting requests, understand the meeting request in relationship to other meetings/scheduled

events on their calendar and provide feedback/responses to the meeting organizer/requestor (primary user; Chapter 10 Managing Calendars – Inviting People to Meetings, Pages 4-5 of 9; Figure 10.35, 10.39).

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention that the system and method for scheduling a plurality of individual meetings as taught by Levoy would have benefited from invitee users receiving and subsequently opening/reading a note containing the appointment template as well as creating and displaying a merged appointment template (i.e. including in the invitee's calendar the requested meeting time) from the primary appointment template and a calendar in view of the teachings of MS Outlook the resultant system/method enabling users to review meeting invitations/requests, understand requested appointments relationship to other appointments on the users calendar and/or respond appropriately to the invitation (MS Outlook: Chapter 10 Managing Calendars – Inviting People to Meetings, Pages 4-5 of 9; "alerts you of any conflicts", Calendar button, Figure 10.38 – wherein the calendar button displays a merged/composite of the user's calendar and the requested meeting/appointment time; Figure 10.35, 10.39).

Regarding Claims 13 and 32 Levoy teaches a system and method for scheduling a plurality of individual meeting further comprising configuring time blocks (slots, windows, etc.) of available meeting times in the appointment template (object) as links wherein selection of a link ("empty"); Column 2, Row 9, Page 3) updates the

appointment template to indicate the acceptance of the appointment time (“Duck Shoot”, Column 2, Row 3, Page 3; “Demo Time Sign Up Sheet”, Pages 3-7).

Levoy does not expressly teach representing the available appointment times as buttons or sending an accept meeting request message to the primary server upon the selection of a button as claimed.

MS Outlook teaches enabling users to respond to a meeting request by selecting one or more buttons wherein the buttons represent the invitee user's response to the meeting request (decline, accept, tentative; Chapter 10 Managing Calendars – Inviting People to Meetings – Receiving a Request to Attend a Meeting, Pages 3-5) in an analogous art of calendaring for the purposes of enabling invitee users to respond, using common/templated responses, to meeting requests (Chapter 10 Managing Calendars – Inviting People to Meetings – Receiving a Request to Attend a Meeting, Pages 3-5).

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention that the system and method for scheduling a plurality of individual meetings as taught by Levoy would have benefited from enabling users to schedule individual meetings by selecting buttons which send responses to meeting requests sent by the primary user in view of the teachings of MS Outlook.; the resultant system/method enabling invitee users to respond, using common/templated responses, to meeting requests (MS

Outlook: Chapter 10 Managing Calendars – Inviting People to Meetings – Receiving a Request to Attend a Meeting, Pages 3-5).

Regarding Claims 14 and 33 Levoy teaches a system and method for scheduling a plurality of individual meeting wherein each time block (window, slot, etc.) being a hyperlink linking the (first) invitee user to a web page on the system (primary server) for disabling the time block (appointment/meeting time) from further selection in the (primary appointment template).

Levoy does not expressly teach updating the calendar (object) of the primary user as claimed.

MS Outlook teaches notifying the primary user of the scheduled meeting ("10. Choose Send in the form's Standard toolbar to send the message. The proposed meeting is added to your calendar with a meeting icon to identify it.", Chapter 10 Managing Calendars – Inviting People to Meetings, Page 3; Chapter 10 Managing Calendars – Inviting People to Meetings, Pages 4-5 of 9; Figures 10.40 – 10.41) in an analogous art of calendaring for the purposes updating the primary user's calendar (Step 10, Chapter 10 Managing Calendars – Inviting People to Meetings, Page 3).

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention that the system and method for scheduling a plurality of individual meetings as taught

by Levoy et al. would have benefited from updating the calendar (object) of the primary user in view of the teachings of MS Outlook; the resultant system/method keeping the primary user's calendar up-to-date (MS Outlook: Step 10, Chapter 10 Managing Calendars – Inviting People to Meetings, Page 3).

Regarding Claims 15-16 and 34-35 Levoy teaches a system and method for scheduling a plurality of individual meeting further comprising distributing an updated (primary) appointment template (calendar, schedule, sign-up sheet) to the invitee users upon the (first/second) invitee user selecting a (first/second) available time (i.e. the online sign-up sheet is continually available to all the students and the sign-up sheet updated upon the scheduling or one or more class project demonstrations; "Demo Time Sign-Up Sheet", Pages 3-7 and 9-11).

9. Claims 3, 6-9, 18-19, 22 and 25-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Levoy, Marc, Demo Time Sign Up Sheet (1999) in view of Microsoft Outlook 2000 (MS Outlook) as evidenced by at least Padwick et al., Using Microsoft Outlook 2000 (1999) as applied to claims 1-2, 4-5, 10-13, 14-17, 20-21, 23-24, 29-33 and 34-36 above and further in view of Scully et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,831,552.

Regarding Claims 3, 18-19 and 22 Levoy teaches a system and method for scheduling a plurality of individual meetings further comprising creating the primary appointment template by defining the users calendar with user selected (defined, identified, etc.) meeting length, time frame and time restrictions as well as days worked, workday start and end times, break times, periodic appointments and previously scheduled appointments (“Monday, November 15, 1999”, Page 3; “TA Meeting”, Column 1, Row 6, Page 3; “Lunch Break”, Column 1, Row 3, Page 11; Time 8.00, Column 1, Row 1, Page 3; Time 6.00, Column 1, Row 1, Page 8).

Levoy is silent on the mechanism use to generate the primary user’s appointment template and subsequently does not expressly teach creating the template by merging the primary user’s calendar and a default template as claimed.

Scully et al. teaches creating/scheduling an appointment/meeting based (combining, overlaying, merging) the users calendar/schedule containing previously schedule appointments/meetings (e.g. availability, free time), the defined/identified

schedules restraints/restrictions (days worked, workday start/end times, etc.) and user's selected (entered) meeting/appointment (e.g. its length, time frame, etc.; Column 22, Lines 18-68; Column 23, Lines 1-68; Column 24, Lines 10-68; Figures 3a-5b) in an analogous art of calendaring for the purposes of enabling users to schedule meetings with a plurality of users while taking into account not only the time in which the invitees are available/free but also the relative importance/priority of previously scheduled events thereby enabling the user to schedule events with users that may have a higher priority/importance (Column 3, Lines 20-57).

More generally Scully et al. teach an electronic calendaring method and system wherein users can create and manage a plurality of appointments/meetings as well as schedule appointments amongst a plurality of users (meeting requests) comprising:

- enabling users to search/view free/available time blocks (time slots, time periods) and other calendar/appointment parameters (e.g. priority) in the calendars of the users they wish to schedule a meeting/appointment with and then schedule the appointment (i.e. add it to their calendars, block off the time slot/period; Column 22, Lines 64-68; Column 23, Lines 45-68; Figures 3a-3c);
- enabling users to identifying days worked, work day start/end times (working, non-working time), time zones, daylight saving times, onsite/offsite and a plurality of other meeting/appointments types/categories (Column 13, Lines 25-68; Columns 15-16) and blocking out (reserving, busy time, unavailable, etc.) previously schedule appointments/meetings and the like (Column 2, Lines 11-35; Column 3, Lines 1-45); and

- utilizes calendar objects which are represented/implemented in multi-dimensional arrays (data structure; Column 6, Lines 11-68; Column 9, Lines 1-40) and enabling users to identify (search for) a plurality of calendar/schedule appointments and/or time blocks based on a plurality of search criteria (Column 23, Lines 60-68; Column 24, Lines 1-68).

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention that the method and system for scheduling appointments/meetings amongst a plurality of users as taught by the combination of Levoy and MS Outlook would have benefited from merging (combining, overlaying, intersecting, etc.) the primary user's calendar and a default template (calendar) in view of the teachings of in view of the teachings of Scully et al.; the resultant system/method enabling users to schedule meetings with a plurality of users taking into account not only the time in which the invitees are available/free but also the relative importance/priority of previously scheduled events thereby enabling the user to schedule events with users that may have a higher priority/importance (Scully et al.: Column 3, Lines 20-57).

Regarding Claims 6 and 25 Levoy does not expressly teach creating the (primary) appointment template as a two dimensional array of objects, each object representing a block of time and an attribute as claimed.

Scully et al. teaches the utilization of calendar objects which are represented/implemented as multi-dimensional arrays (data structure; Column 6, Lines 11-68; Column 9, Lines 1-40) and enabling users to identify (search for) a plurality of calendar/schedule appointments and/or time blocks based on a plurality of search criteria (Column 23, Lines 60-68; Column 24, Lines 1-68) in an analogous art of calendaring.

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention that the system and method for scheduling meetings amongst a plurality of users as taught by Levoy and MS Outlook would have benefited from utilizing any of a plurality of data structures/approaches for representing calendars/schedules/meetings including but not limited to multi-dimensional arrays and calendar objects in view of the teachings of Scully et al.; the resultant system providing a convenient mechanism for storing and searching appointment/meeting schedules.

Further it is noted that these differences are only found in the non-functional descriptive material and are not functionally involved in the steps recited nor do they alter the recited structural elements. The recited method steps would be performed the same regardless of the specific data structure utilized to stored the appointment/schedule information. Further, the structural elements remain the same regardless of the specific data structure utilized. Thus, this descriptive material will not distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art in terms of patentability, see *In re*

Gulack, 703 F.2d 1381, 1385, 217 USPQ 401, 404 (Fed. Cir. 1983); In re Lowry, 32 F.3d 1579, 32 USPQ2d 1031 (Fed. Cir. 1994); MPEP 2106.

Regarding Claims 7 and 26 Levoy teaches a system and method for scheduling a plurality of individual meetings wherein the calendar (schedule, appointment template, sign-up sheet) comprises a plurality of attributes including at least one of the following (selected from the group) scheduled meeting, free time, start time, end time or break time ("TA Meeting", Column 1, Row 6, Page 3; "Lunch", Column 1, Row 2, Page 4; "Lunch Break", Column 1, Row 3, Page 11).

Levoy is silent on the data structure/application environment utilized by the system and therefore does not expressly teach representing the calendar (schedule, appointment, etc.) as an object as claimed.

Scully et al. teaches the utilization of calendar objects which are represented/implemented as multi-dimensional arrays (data structure; Column 6, Lines 11-68; Column 9, Lines 1-40) in an analogous art of calendaring for the purposes modeling the calendar using well known object-oriented techniques which provide the well known benefit of providing a convenient mechanism for modeling and/or coding systems.

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention that the system and method for scheduling meetings amongst a plurality of users as taught by Levoy and MS Outlook would have benefited from utilizing any of a plurality of data structures/approaches for representing calendars/schedules/meetings including but not limited to multi-dimensional arrays and calendar objects in view of the teachings of Scully et al.; the resultant system providing the well known benefit of providing a convenient mechanism for modeling and/or coding systems.

Regarding Claims 8 and 27 while the utilization of menus and pop-up windows for data entry is old and very well known Levoy is silent on how the (primary) appointment template is created and subsequently does not expressly teach presenting to the primary user a menu entry and associated pop-up windows for creating the (primary) appointment template as claimed.

MS Outlook teaches using well known graphical user interface elements (components, metaphors, etc.) including but not limited to menus and pop-up windows (boxes) that enable users to create, schedule and manage a plurality of calendar events (meetings, appointments) in an analogous art of calendaring for the purposes of providing users with a graphical user interface for managing their calendar (Chapter 10 Managing Calendars – Inviting People to Meetings; Figures 10.35-10.41).

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention that the system and method for scheduling a plurality of individual meetings as taught by Levoy would have benefited from utilizing any of a plurality of well known user interface (graphical user interface) components to enable users to create/edit the appointment template (sign-in sheet) including but not limited to menus and pop-up windows in view of the teachings of MS Outlook; the resultant system and method enabling users to manage their calendar via a graphical user interface (Chapter 10 Managing Calendars – Inviting People to Meetings; Figures 10.35-10.41).

Regarding Claims 9 and 28 Levoy teaches a system and method for scheduling a plurality of individual meetings further comprising distributing (providing, presenting, etc.) the (primary) appointment template (sign-up sheet) as a graphical object (HTML table) including time slots available for selection by prospective meeting attendees (user invitees; “Demo Time Sign-Up Sheet”, Pages 3-7).

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

- Brown, David, U.S. Patent Publication No. 2001/0051892, teaches a system and method for scheduling a plurality of individual appointments with a plurality of users on a calendar of a primary user wherein users select one or more appointment time slots that are then added to the primary user's calendar and blocked from being selected/scheduled by subsequent users.

- My Sign Up Sheet (2006) teaches the public availability of a program for providing online sign-up sheets, as early as July 2001, wherein a plurality of users can "sign-up" (reserve, book, schedule, etc.) for one or more time slots.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Scott L. Jarrett whose telephone number is (571) 272-7033. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 8:00AM - 5:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Hafiz Tariq can be reached on (571) 272-6729. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


SJ
4/28/2006


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